

BUDDING- PSYCH

So basically, can you just give me a little bit of background about how one goes about getting extended time accommodations on the SAT and ACT?

Well, I'll have to back up a little bit and say there's different kinds of assessments people can obtain. You can't just say, "hi I want additional time" and [the exam companies] say, "sure here you go." There has to be a demonstrated need for additional time, and that's just one accommodation. You can obtain extra time if you have documented impairments and disabilities, right? Traditionally people either obtain psycho-educational assessments which tend to focus more on IQ testing and academic testing or [one can obtain a] neuropsychological evaluation which is more comprehensive and in-depth. Typically, by the time somebody gets to high school they're already receiving accommodations because a learning disability, ADHD or another neurodevelopmental problem has been identified earlier on in their education and they have already received accommodations [through] various kinds of support in their academic environment. So, the most common reasons for seeking those kinds of accommodations is because the student has been receiving them for a very long time and has documented need for them.

Okay, how widespread how common is it? Would you say for students to receive extended time accommodations that particular accommodation on college entrance exams?

I don't know because I'm on the clinical side [of this] and the kinds of things I publish aren't really about that. I haven't kept up with the data on it. I have a particular Niche I reside in which has to do with complicated disorders where there's multiple comorbidities and some medical issues, so I tend to see the very complicated cases. I tend not to see the cases that are considered very simple and straightforward. I also don't tend to see people who are just for the first time asking for additional time on the SAT or ACT. It has been rare. There's been rare occasions where there's been a student that had some processing issues and their parents hadn't obtained a lot of outside support for them. So, they've never obtained formal accommodation in the school setting so there isn't there isn't a paper trail documenting their difficulties.

If there's no paper trail documenting previous difficulties. How much harder does that make it to get accommodations? Or obtain evaluations?

I don't know the answer to that question. But I imagine that the testing folks would scrutinize that a little more. Now, [that's] not to say that there aren't absolutely valid cases where that comes through especially if the student has a lot of pride in their academic performance and they don't want to have anything special or additional given to them. I've known student who qualify for accommodations, but they won't take them. So, I really see it on a case-by-case basis, but I do know that the testing services will not just take somebody's word. I mean technically it's not supposed to happen [like that]. I can't speak for any individual person's behavior, but the way it's supposed to work, is that if you request accommodations, and sz

Do you, so this may also can be something that you're not particularly in to, but do you notice maybe at your practice in particular that you have more public or private school kids showing up to get evaluated?

It's depends. Neuropsychological evaluations are very expensive. So, I have a real combination of both partly because I do private fee assessments...and again, anybody who's just looking for a garden-variety ADHD diagnosis I tend to send away [they] don't need me, [they] don't need my expertise for that. So, anybody who's coming to see me probably has a more complicated case. I also contract directly with school districts if there are contested cases about what kinds of services somebody needs. So, students who are in a public-school environment who would not typically have access to an assessment from a neuropsychologist will be able to have access to one through the school district paying for [evaluation]. So, I see a mix of things and I do see a combination of both public and private schools. What I do tell parents is that if somebody's calling me where there's no previous documentation of accommodations or additional time or anything given, I tell them very bluntly that I cannot guarantee that the test results are going to support their request and that if [the results don't support their request], they don't.

as far as the when you look at the court documents for this submission Scandal.

It looks as though. Rick Singer who's the guy who was at the head of the whole thing had his own sort of psychologist that were, you know, very willing to just Dole out diagnoses.

I don't know who any of those people are actually. I don't, I was unfamiliar with him, even though I do see a number of people from Orange County, I was not familiar with him, so I don't know who he tends to work with.

Okay, do you how common do you think that that sort of thing is where there are kind of just people doling out these diagnoses without appropriate scrutiny.

I well again, I function in a very.... the community of people that I work with have very, very, very high standards. So, this is not something I have personally seen someone ever do. If anything [my colleagues have] done an evaluation and said, “you know, I’m sorry the data just don’t support what you’re requesting. You can go ahead and ask for accommodation, but I think it’s unlikely they will provide them.” In some cases, I have evaluated people who I felt there was a very strong case that they needed accommodations and they have been turned down and had to go back and reapply before they got them. So, in my experience this these accommodations are not things that are doled out like candy, so I don’t I honestly don’t know how there were people who are able to obtain them so easily. It’s very much of a head scratcher for me.

Yeah. I’m trying to figure out the same thing.

Honestly. Just recently there were accommodations I was documenting for a student and they were able to get some of them but not all of them. So, and again, I’m a board-certified neuropsychologist. I do a comprehensive neuropsychological evaluation. This isn’t just “oh you look like somebody who needs accommodations” checkbox, right? So, I don’t know how certain people got things through. It’s just never been my experience at all.